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A RISK OF UNREST SEEN IN EAST BLOC

U.S. Officials Assert Hungary,
Rumania and Poland Face
Mainly Economic Peril

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Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Feb. 27 — Reagan Administration officials who analyze political and economic trends in Eastern Europe say they believe three of the six Warsaw Pact countries face domestic instability, mainly as a result of deterioration in their economies.

One official, in response to questions, said he had concluded that Hungary was "most at risk" as its Communist leadership seeks to impose an austerity program involving steep price increases and higher taxes. "We see Hungary as facing a considerable degree of instability," he remarked.

He and a second official said they had concluded that Rumania and Poland were also at risk.

This official said "we will see a lot more demonstrations" of the kind that occurred in November in Brasov, Rumania's second largest city, when the Government tried to cut the pay of factory workers and they took to the streets.

At the same time, both analysts said the Soviet Union appeared unlikely to intervene militarily to impose its will on Warsaw Pact allies, as it did in Czechoslovakia in 1968, Hungary in 1956 and East Germany in 1953.

Heightened U.S. Attention

The possibility of instability in Eastern Europe has heightened the attention of the United States to the region, perhaps more, one official suggested, than at any time since the unrest caused by the liberalization movement in Czechoslovakia 20 years ago. The concerns of Administration policymakers are also influenced by their current efforts to deepen relations with the Soviet Union, he said.

While the Government analysts, whose task is to gauge trends in Eastern Europe, spoke plainly about a potential for crisis in the region, Deputy Secretary of State John C. Whitehead said in an interview, "I don't see any sign of any impending crisis in any of the countries of Eastern Europe."

Germany and Hungary late last year and who has just returned from a trip to Poland, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria and Rumania, is the State Department's chief official on Eastern Europe. Asked specifically about the possibility of instability in Hungary, he replied, "Quite the contrary," although he acknowledged that the Hungarians were facing economic difficulties.

But he said he was convinced that under Mikhail S. Gorbachev, the Soviet Union was allowing the East European governments a good deal of room to decide how to deal with domestic problems. He is generally supported in this view by the Government analysts.

"I have the feeling they have a lot of latitude," Mr. Whitehead said. "No one has blown a whistle in a serious way so far. I see practically no chance, no evidence of the Russians intervening in any way."

Soviet Demands Cited

The other officials said that the perception that Moscow was giving more latitude to the East Europeans was only partly correct, and that while there was a more flexible attitude toward experimentation and change, the Soviet Union was continuing to insist on cohesion in military and economic relations. They pointed out that Moscow has recently been calling on its allies to increase military spending and purchase more Soviet industrial products. One analyst said he believed the Soviet demands would be partly met, "but not as much as they would like."

Examining the impact in Eastern Europe of Mr. Gorbachev's demands for changes in the highly centralized Communist economies, the officials voiced skepticism. They said they had not seen concrete signs of change in the practice of central planning, only "fixes," as one put it.

On this point Mr. Whitehead said he also differed. "Change is in the air," he said, adding: "Each is rapidly changing the political system, and each is rapidly changing the economic system. They are not necessarily the same changes as in Moscow."

In their diagnosis of the common ills of Eastern Europe, the Government officials said they perceived a situation of economic stagnation, a decrease in living standards and the rise of what one called "a parallel society" of people who work in extra jobs. One said that "a prime source of instability is the second economy," which is largely outside government control. "People holding two and even three jobs are stretched to the limit," he remarked.

Meanwhile, the officials said they believed that the power of East Europe's ruling Communist parties was declining. They said their studies showed decreases in the number of young people entering the parties.